

Braille Monitor



OCTOBER, 1984

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

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National Federation of the Blind
Box 11185
Kansas City, Kansas 66111

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SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND- IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES

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REHABILITATION FOR THE BLIND: PATTERNS, PROBLEMS, AND OPTIONS

by Ramona Walhof

(Note: The following article is a revised and expanded version of the address given by Mrs. Ramona Walhof at the annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Phoenix, Arizona, July 4, 1984.)

When an individual becomes blind, it is a major adjustment—for the person, for friends, and for the family. Sudden blindness means a change in the way of doing things in the daily routine of activities. It very often also means a change of employment as well. What is easy and normal for most of us in this room who are blind carries with it real fear until the adjustment to blindness has been completed.

If blindness does not occur suddenly, it may actually be worse, because months or years may be wasted in trying to avoid the fact that blindness is a reality. When the blind person is a child, then the parents must change their thinking. Recently I heard a speech by the sighted mother of a blind child. She said that at first she wasted additional months and prolonged her agony by pretending that the child and the family were better off because of the child's blindness. The child has been blind since birth, but the mother still could not speak of the matter without tears and trembling. We are not criticizing this mother's attitude. We understand it. Because of the Federa-

tion that mother is not now alone. She needs support and reassurance. Her feelings will shape the attitudes and feelings of her child about his blindness. We in the Federation are helping that mother, as well as society in general, to understand that blindness (properly understood) can be only one of hundreds of characteristics making up a normal child. Yes, we can and will help her. But how many mothers have not yet found the Federation?

The American Heritage Dictionary defines rehabilitation like this: "1. to restore to good condition as through education and therapy. 2. to reinstate the good name of, to restore the former rank, privileges or rights of." If we apply this definition to the blind, then rehabilitation seeks to assist the blind to attain the same conditions, name, rank, privileges, and/or other rights possessed by the sighted. It is a reasonable definition. If we accept this definition, then we need to consider goals and how to reach those goals. These, as I see them, are the goals that we need to seek through the rehabilitation process; and as a precondition, we need to pose certain questions. What goals are reasonable and achievable? What is the process for reaching these goals? How can we change the rehabilitation system from what it is today to what it should be? In dealing with these questions, we must, at least

briefly, consider history very briefly.

Prior to the nineteenth century, only alms were offered to the blind. About a century and a half ago schools (both public and private) were established for blind children. The first type of employment for the blind was in sheltered workshops. To a large degree these workshops grew out of the schools for the blind. As a part of the regular curriculum, the schools began to teach skills such as broom-making and rug weaving to prepare blind people for the only employment that was likely to be available. Schools for blind children and sheltered workshops were a start toward rehabilitation—but only a start.

Although we do not customarily think of it this way, the first libraries for the blind grew out of legislation passed in 1879. A trust fund was created for the American Printing House for the Blind, and \$10,000 was available from the fund annually for the production of Braille textbooks. The heads of the schools for the blind became the board of trustees for the Printing House, and most schools for the blind began to build small Braille libraries. As would be expected, when blind people began to learn to read and write and to earn a meager living, a few of them aspired to enter college. During the first few years of the twentieth century, Dr. Newel Perry and some of his friends persuaded the New York legislature to make funds available for the payment of readers for blind college students—another beginning.

When the Smith-Fess Act was passed by Congress in 1919 to assist disabled veterans after World War I no mention was made of the blind. It was not considered feasible to rehabilitate blind

persons. In 1931 there was the Pratt-Smoot Act, which gave the Library of Congress responsibility for establishing a nationwide system of Braille libraries. In 1933 talking books were added. In 1936 the Randolph-Sheppard Act gave the blind preference in establishing vending stands in federal buildings. Also in that year, the Social Security Act provided the beginnings of monthly income to a small number of blind persons. But all these programs were treated and generally regarded as charities.

If further progress was to be made, there was clearly a need for a new way of looking at things, a new attitude. The blind must take a hand in their own destiny. They must come out of isolation and take concerted action. You know the result: the establishment of the National Federation of the Blind in 1940.

In 1943 the Barden-LaFollette Act witnessed the beginnings of rehabilitation for the blind. But the attitude was still largely one of charity. The full force of the Federation was yet to be felt, but the seeds were being planted and the spirit was beginning to grow.

As the amount of federal money available to rehabilitation for the blind increased through the fifties and sixties the paperwork also increased. There was the inevitable and irresistible attempt to standardize and formalize. Thus grew the power, the cumbersomeness, and the inefficiency of the federal and state rehabilitation bureaucracies. As the strength and awareness of the organized blind movement increased, certain changes began to manifest themselves in the cumbersome reha-

bilitation establishment. Sometimes because of and sometimes in reaction to the pressure of the organized blind, there were amendments to the Social Security, Randolph-Sheppard, and Rehabilitation Acts. By the 1970's there began to be a general recognition (if only a little) that the blind had rights.

It was in the 1960's that the Iowa Commission for the Blind demonstrated that a separate, consolidated agency for the blind with energetic and imaginative leadership could perform at a level not previously attempted by any rehabilitation program. Or, put it another way: For the first time in history a state agency, the Iowa Commission for the Blind, really did rehabilitate large numbers of blind individuals. It lasted for a period of about fifteen years. The dates are not exact, for it took Dr. Jernigan some time to build the program to maturity—and it took his successor a little time to destroy it. But the demonstration by the Iowa Commission for the Blind still stands for all to see as irrefutable proof of what can and should be done in rehabilitation. Other states have tried to follow that example and have succeeded to one degree or another. Perhaps Idaho came the closest in the early 1970's. That is right—to my regret—not the 1980's. The Idaho Commission for the Blind was at its best in 1972 or 1973. It slid down hill for the next ten years. In 1982 we tried to reverse the trend and got a good start, but our efforts were blocked by those who did not care or did not know what harm they were doing to the blind.

You know the other states where there have been significant steps in the right direction. They have helped to create

better rehabilitation for the blind. There are a number of reasons why they have not been able to repeat the Iowa example—cumbersome structure; increasing federal rules and regulations; pressure from traditionalists, who claim to be experts; politics, both internal and external; and above all, lack of sufficiently dynamic and imaginative leadership.

There have been a few minor improvements in services to blind persons provided by rehabilitation, but there are many areas where things are steadily getting worse—and you know it. Today there is more money available to rehabilitation than ever before in history, but on average services are worse today than they were ten years ago. Legislation has made it possible to improve rehabilitation, but the legislation has often been misused. Today if a blind person has enough knowledge and guts and if he or she enlists the help of the National Federation of the Blind, the rehabilitation agency can usually be brought to do what it should do—but not always and not easily.

So we come back to the central question: What can we do about it? How can we get rehabilitation to put into practice the constructive methods that exist and use wisely the money available to help the blind?

To become equals in society blind people need four things from rehabilitation: 1) They need to come to understand that blind people count for something, that they can perform competitively at home, on the job, and in the community. 2) Blind people must learn to face demeaning attitudes towards blindness on the part of others without letting their own inner security and

self-esteem be eroded or destroyed. 3) Blind people need to learn certain skills which will enable them to function efficiently and competitively—skills involving different techniques from those employed by the sighted. 4) Blind people need the money to pay the bills for prevocational and vocational training. If these four things are provided, rehabilitation will be effective. If any of these items is omitted, rehabilitation for the blind will be a failure. Everything else is peripheral.

To make the point, let us consider certain provisions of the laws as they functioned in the 1970's—provisions that should have been major steps forward for the blind but which were so misused and distorted as to become of questionable or negative value. Blind Californians were among the first to realize that Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act could be misused by rehabilitation itself. In that state services for the blind are jumbled in with other rehabilitation programs. Formerly the California legislature appropriated half a million dollars to rehabilitation for the payment of reader services for blind college students. As universities began to take some responsibility for the payment of readers for the blind, rehabilitation began to try to evade the responsibility. The half million dollars was transferred from rehabilitation to the university system in California. The university administration was so spread out and so lacking in understanding of the purpose of reader service that the state had to add another half million dollars to the fund. University officials who only work occasionally with the blind are not the right people to try to figure out how

much money is needed for reader service for blind college students. In this so-called progressive step and increased funding, who got short changed? The blind and the tax payers. There is a lesson in it, too—and we would all do well to ponder and learn.

And California is not unique—only first. In Colorado the blind fared better. An attempt was made to mix readers for the blind with interpreter services for the deaf. There was a special bill proposed for the funding of these two programs. The blind opposed the inclusion of reader services in the bill. There was no ill will toward the deaf—far from it. Both the deaf and the blind stood a better chance of receiving what was really needed if the two services were separated. Under the leadership of Diane McGeorge and Homer Page our efforts were successful.

The federal Rehabilitation Act provides for what is called the "Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program," (the IWRP), which could be, and was meant to be, a helpful tool to both counselor and client. As the law says, the IWRP shall "set forth the terms and conditions, as well as the rights and remedies, under which goods and services will be provided to the individual. It must be reviewed and may be revised annually." Clients and counselors must agree to its terms, which must include (again to quote the law): "a statement of long-range rehabilitation goals and intermediate objectives, a statement of specific rehabilitation services to be provided, and the projected date for the initiation and the anticipated duration of each service." The IWRP gets misused at least as often as it is used. This is especially true when counselors hide

behind such mysterious provisions of the law as the so-called "similar benefits." The Rehabilitation Act provides that other means of paying certain bills must be sought before rehabilitation funds can be used (which Congress intended as a means of common sense and fiscal responsibility); but Congress did not mean for this provision of the law to be used as a means of intimidating blind people or depriving them of services to which they are legally entitled. Although it happens, counselors are not supposed to say to a client things like this: "Since you were not able to get this financing from some other source, then rehabilitation cannot pay the bill." Some counselors seem to revel in the power which some pronouncements give. They either don't know that the statement is false, or they figure that the blind person doesn't know. Also counselors should not say to blind college students: "The reader service funds from the college must be the right amount so rehabilitation cannot supplement them or help you." It happens. You know it happens.

This is a misuse of federal legislation. Congressional intent is clear. Counselors and clients should agree that both will seek "similar benefits" such as scholarships and grants. If these are not available, rehabilitation can and should pay the bills. If money is received in the form of "similar benefits" to cover only part of the cost, rehabilitation can pay the difference, and it is morally and legally obligated to do so. This is true of tuition, living expenses, books, supplies, and reader services. But the "similar benefits" provision of the federal Rehabilitation Act, along with the IWRP, is often being

used these days to penalize, custodialize, and intimidate clients.

The blind continue to have good will from legislators, public officials, and the society at large—but the rehabilitation system (with all of its custodialism, repression, and red tape, differences from one agency to the next) has slowly lost credibility with the government, from the public, and especially the blind. It is no exaggeration to say that the average blind person has no confidence at all in the rehabilitation system. To be perfectly frank about the matter, most people in rehabilitation don't themselves have any confidence in the system—because (all protestations to the contrary) they have no confidence in the blind. This has been, and is, the biggest problem we have in getting rehabilitation to do what it should do.

Today's rehabilitation system is geared toward the staff and the bureaucracy, not toward the blind client. Yes, there have been both fraud and misdoing in some of the agencies, but these are not the principal problems. It is more a matter of inertia, lack of understanding and belief, and the pressure for voluminous reports and statistics. It is also the matter of taking the easy way out and trying to make every blind person (regardless of individual aptitudes or desires) fit into a few jobs that are thought to be suitable. It is, for instance, perfectly respectable to be a computer programmer or a social worker, but not all blind people are either interested or suited for these professions. It is respectable to work in sheltered shops, but it is better to do the same job in competitive industry. And, of course, I need

not say to this audience that blind people can enter almost any profession one could think of. Yet, the blind (even at this late date in our history) are still being stampeded into a limited number of professions and occupations because of the age-old stereotypes—not just the stereotypes held by the public but by the professionals in rehabilitation as well.

Let us return to our four basic elements needed in rehabilitation for the blind: confidence in one's self, ability to deal with public attitudes, acquisition of special skills, and money to pay the bills. The current rehabilitation system, with a very few notable exceptions, does not have the capacity to do the first two of these things. Most counselors, teachers, and administrators cannot help blind people with confidence in themselves, because they do not have such confidence. And they cannot help blind people deal with public attitudes because they share those attitudes. In short, the system is unable to do what is needed. Therefore, it is not surprising that very little is happening as far as rehabilitation is concerned in these first two areas.

However, there are people in the rehabilitation system (and a fair number of them) who can teach the skills—cane travel, Braille, cooking, typing, abacus, and shop. They teach less well than they would if they had the right attitudes—but they teach. There are blind people who are learning these skills. Many of them are less successful than they would have been if the skills had been taught in combination with the attitudes—in fact, most of them. However, the ability to teach the skills is something. It is there—and

we can make rehabilitation teach skills better.

Likewise, we can do something about the fourth area. The rehabilitation system today has the money to pay the bills. This is the undeniable truth. Rehabilitation has bigger appropriations than ever before in its history, and no amount of "poor-mouthing" will make it not so. If the money now available to rehabilitation for the blind were spent wisely and for services to clients, there would be more than enough to pay for the services actually available.

Yes, the rehabilitation system for the blind is not doing what it should do, what it was meant to do, or what is needed. There have been backsliding and misuse of good legislation, and there have also been a few improvements in certain areas. With all of this, we as blind people are better off today than we were thirty, twenty, or even ten years ago. If this is true and if rehabilitation has not been responsible for solving the problems or making the progress, how has it happened? The answer is obvious, and you know what it is as well as I do. It is the National Federation of the Blind.

The Federation has not merely helped the blind in general terms. It has brought improvements in the courts, in legislation, in skills, in public attitudes, and (such as there has been) in rehabilitation itself. The question may reasonably be put: "Who is rehabilitating whom?" Let us look at the record. In the 1960's the Iowa Commission for the Blind had a policy which blind vendors could follow if they were dissatisfied with actions of the agency—in other words an appeal procedure. It went like this: The matter would be

heard by a three-member panel—one to be chosen by the vendor, one by the agency, and the third by the first two. Some of you will recognize this procedure as the one now required nationally when vendor disputes are taken to arbitration. I wonder how such a coincidence could have happened. Could it be that the federal officials adopted the Iowa practice when it was pushed forward by the Federation?

Perhaps more blind people have become truly independent cane travelers because of what they have experienced in the Federation than from any other kind of instruction. During the 1960's at NFB conventions the Iowans stuck out for their cane travel skills and were envied (even somewhat resented at times) because they had a kind of training not available anywhere else in the nation. But that is no longer true. Some of the rehabilitation programs have followed the Iowa example in cane travel, but it goes far beyond that. Informal cane travel lessons occur constantly when blind people go places and do things together—things like the March on Washington, Federation conventions, NAC Tracking, and thousands of state and local activities. Some who cannot get good cane travel training solve the problem by getting training to travel with dog guides—and, of course, some choose dog guides by preference. Blind people will not and need not be in prison any longer because of inability to get around, and although the Federation was the prime initial mover, impetus toward independent mobility has now reached far beyond the Federation. Almost any group of blind people that meets anywhere in the nation today has more and better independent travelers than a similar group would have had five

years ago—not just in particular places but everywhere.

In spite of the fact that good training and counseling are often not available to the blind, the Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB) program operated by the NFB and the Department of Labor has helped hundreds and thousands of blind people set their goals higher than they would have been. As a result of JOB blind people have secured new and better jobs. JOB literature and advice are having an effect upon blind people and rehabilitation alike, even though many rehabilitation counselors and administrators would deny it and often try to ignore it. And speaking of jobs, we have not yet come to the time when all blind people are paid the federal minimum wage in sheltered workshops, but we have made progress—and we will make more.

The greatest contribution which the National Federation of the Blind has made to the rehabilitation system is the literature which we have developed, especially during the last ten years. Our books, articles, speeches, the Braille Monitor, and Future Reflections describe the needs, report the successes, chronicle the failures, and demonstrate our goals. Our literature is the goad, the conscience, and the touchstone of performance for the field. It is the beacon for the future and the balance-staff for perspective. Whether it likes it or not, rehabilitation is irresistibly dragged toward better performance and better opportunities for clients because of our literature. The methods and the knowledge are there waiting to be used by the professionals to improve the system and benefit the blind.

Rehabilitation for the blind is not what it should be—but we know who can change it, and we know how. There is a serious question concerning rehabilitation facing us today, and that question must receive careful attention. What do we as blind people want to do with the rehabilitation system? After all, it is our lives and the lives of our children which are affected. It is up to us to decide and to act. Rehabilitation is busy trying to preserve itself and protect its salaries. We cannot blame the people involved. Jobs and income are important—but we as blind people have vital interests at stake. We the blind must decide what kind of service is most important and how to get it. The age of pleading and handouts is over. If rehabilitation is to be not a charity but a right, if it is to fulfill the promise of helping the blind achieve first-class citizenship, then we the blind have the right to a major voice in designing the structure and building the edifice. If rehabilitation means anything else, it is not a promise but a mockery.

So what shall we do with it, this rehabilitation system which has promised so much and given (after all) so little? There are many possibilities. Some recommend that programs for the blind be separate agencies to qualify for federal funds. Any state that refuses would get no federal money. Others propose that those needing rehabilitation be issued vouchers which they could spend for any agency or individual for the service they want anywhere in the country. They could be provided with a list (although not limited to its use) of recommended public and private suppliers of services throughout the nation. They could choose which suppliers to use just as

high school students choose colleges and universities. Another suggestion is that rehabilitation for the blind has accomplished all that it can and that the blind would be better off if all publicly funded rehabilitation for the blind were eliminated. This is a frightening concept to some—but think about it. To the question, "If such a thing were to happen, where would the blind go for training?" There is an obvious answer, which takes the form of another question? "Where can they go now?"

The questions and possibilities I have raised are by no means all of the ideas which are being discussed and considered. These are far-reaching proposals, and I am not recommending all or any of them. I am only saying that we are the ones who must decide and that the time is running out. One thing is clear: The National Federation of the Blind has had and will continue to have a profound influence on what is done, thought, and planned—by the rehabilitation system, as well as all of the other entities affecting the blind. We do not pretend that we control rehabilitation, for we don't. But we do say this: We are the most powerful single influence in the affairs of the blind today. We are because we care the most, and because we know the most about it. Collectively we know more about rehabilitation and the rehabilitation system than the federal and state officials who administer it.

We must give careful thought and attention to restructuring rehabilitation for the blind in the best interest of the blind—and of society as a whole. You and I know that if we decide rehabilitation is doing more harm than good,

we can destroy it—and in that case we should. This is not a threat but a sober statement of fact. We cannot shrink from difficult decisions, and we have not. We are at a critical point in the history of work with the blind and of what happens to rehabilitation. We can change the system by competing with it, by talking to it, by legislating it, by seeking more or less funding for it, by appealing its decisions, and by teaching it. Currently in most agencies there are a few individuals who help

some with some things. We should either build a system that helps most of the people who need help most of the time, or we should eliminate the system as it now functions altogether. We have no choice. Even no action at all would be action. Whether we like it or not, we must decide; we must act; and we must do it without undo delay. Upon the wisdom of our choice depends the quality of life for the blind of this country for possibly a generation.

A TRIBUTE TO GERTRUDE SITT

As Monitor readers know, Gertrude Sitt died during the closing hours of the NFB convention this summer in Phoenix. Under date of July 17, 1984, the following letter (accompanied by a check in the amount of \$1,000) was received in the National Office of the Federation:

Triformation Systems, Inc.
Stuart, Florida

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

When Gertrude Sitt passed away during the closing session of the NFB convention in Phoenix, both of us lost a friend, and Braille lost a tireless champion. I know it meant a great deal to her that the founding members of the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille elected her to serve as its second vice president. As you must

surely know, I share NAPUB's and Gertrude's dedication to Braille which upholds the highest standards of excellence at the lowest possible cost. Gertrude Sitt devoted what turned out to be the last four years of her life to the task of making these values tangible at Triformation Braille Service.

When TBS was established four years ago, we eagerly recruited her to anchor the proofreading staff because we knew she had experience and respect for the medium of Braille which money could not buy. When the production schedule at TBS grew so heavy last year that a proofreading supervisor became a must, Gertrude was the only candidate we seriously considered.

Her dedication to quality Braille was a primary motivating factor which was reflected in the work of all her colleagues. I feel certain that her zeal for Braille will live on in those who

attempt to assume her demanding work both in the Federation and here at Triformation Braille Service.

The enclosed check expresses symbolically the respect and admiration of Gertrude's colleagues at TBS and Triforma-

tion Systems, Inc. Use it to support the work to which she and you have devoted such energy and dedication.

Sincerely,
Guy Carboneau, President

OF THE OREGON SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND THE LEGACY OF NAC

by Kenneth Jernigan

There was a time (pre-World War II) when the residential schools for the blind rode supreme. In almost every state in the country the "School" was all there was—or all that really counted. Academic programs were strong, and no one would have dreamed of questioning that a blind child needed education, or that the best place to get that education was at the "School."

There were changes in the 1940's, but these were more in the nature of signs and portents than actual occurrences. With the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1943 (Barden-LaFollette) the blind were to be included, but at first the stream was only a trickle. It would be at least a decade before the trickle would become a river, and still later before it would become a flood—and later yet before it would become a destructive torrent.

It was also in the 1940's that the wave of premature babies who were blinded by retrolental fibroplasia began to emerge and move through society. By the time the wave subsided in the 1950's

10,000 additional blind children were spread through the population, and the education of blind children would never be the same again—which, some said, was the greatest thing since apple pie and others said was the quintessence of going to hell in a handbasket. Regardless of who was right, the residential schools for the blind simply could not cope with the increased numbers of blind children, and the parents were not in the mood to sit and ring their hands. In California, for instance, the school (at a maximum) could probably cope with 200 students, and there were approximately six times that many waiting in the wings to be educated.

No matter how wealthy the state might be, it was simply not in the cards that it would spend the money to increase the facilities of the residential school six hundred percent. And even if such a project were undertaken it would be at least a few years before it could be finished. In the meantime blind children would be sitting at home, and their parents would be beating on the politi-

cians.

The only answer seemed to be to send the blind children to the regular public schools in their home communities, but who would teach them? And how would they function? At this stage the American Foundation for the Blind stepped into the picture and said that it would happily provide the answer. It said that the public school was the proper setting for the blind child in any case. Yes, the residential school was all right if the blind child came from a bad or a broken home or had severe and multiple handicaps, but otherwise (as Foundation staffers were fond of saying): "You really wouldn't want your child to have to go away from home, would you—and besides, do you think your home is a bad place and not up to standard?" The Foundation indicated that it would train teachers, help organize parents, help set up university programs to serve as focal points for it all, and generally take charge.

As with many things, the Foundation's actions and motives were mixed. There was unquestionably a need for more teachers trained to educate blind children, but it is hard to see how the political activity of the American Foundation for the Blind in organizing and propagandizing parents was anything other than destructive and negative. In the name of independence the Foundation indoctrinated the parents to believe that their blind children were the very opposite—very limited, very dependent upon a highly specialized support system (emanating, of course, from the American Foundation for the Blind), and very mysterious and difficult to understand—certainly not able to be raised by ordinary parents in the ordinary way with

nothing more than the adaptations which should be made by common sense and a few helpful suggestions from time to time. Moreover, the Foundation made a great mystique of having long classroom discussions in its university teacher training programs and special education classes as to which was better: "the residential school setting," or the "integrated or public school setting?" Of course, the discussions begged the question, for integration and geographic proximity are not necessarily the same thing. Ask some of the token blacks who were placed in white school classes. They can tell you.

The focus should have been on quality education in both settings. It was not an either or proposition, for there are advantages and disadvantages both ways. Either kind of setting can be good, and either kind can be bad. A great deal of damage was done and a great many opportunities missed by the political maneuverings and the over psychologizing of the American Foundation for the Blind and its disciples in the early decades of the Retrolental Fibroplasia problem. For that matter, the same is true today—and not just in the field of education.

Be that as it may by the time of the 1970's and 80's most of the residential schools for the blind had been very nearly ruined, being more in the nature of custodial institutions for the multiply handicapped than schools for the education of children. To compound the problem there were a great many normal blind children left in these schools, as there still are today. Despite the glib "professional" talk about quality education, such normal blind children were and are being graduated

with very little academic skill or background and scant hope of competing on terms of equality with others in the work-a-day world. Even with all of the emphasis on the multiply handicapped and the scrambling to get more students, the residential schools have had trouble getting anybody to attend. With all of the bad press they got from the American Foundation for the Blind decade after decade it is little wonder.

As the wave of Retrolental Fibroplasia has subsided, the public school classes have fared little better. The tendency has been to try to keep jobs for the teachers by further "integrating." Mix the blind, the retarded, the deaf, and every other disability group. Never mind that the academic result may be zero and the expectations very nearly as low. After all, the important thing is that everybody be "mainstreamed." Integration, being with one's peer group, and proper "parenting" are the name of the game. Let us not be misunderstood or misquoted: The objection is not to mainstreaming. Mainstreaming can be a positive and a constructive experience, but it is not a magic formula; nor is a residential school necessarily and irrevocably the passport to ruin and maladjustment. The very argument pitting one against the other is one of the principal causes of the problems which both have experienced and the failure to recognize and cope with real issues.

Into all of this mish-mash a new element (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped—NAC) was injected in the late 1960's. NAC promised that it would bring salvation and a new Jerusalem, not just to the residential schools but to all of the agencies work-

ing with the blind. If an agency or school would only sign up, this would be proof that it was giving "quality service," and it would mean that it would be trusted by the public and the blind alike. It could use NAC accreditation to get the appropriations and donations it needed, and good times would surely be ahead. Unfortunately many of the residential schools took the bait and bought the line.

Interestingly, more residential schools have sought and received NAC accreditation than probably any other class of agency serving the blind, and more residential schools have probably found themselves in greater trouble than any other type of agency. A prime example is the Oregon School for the Blind. For a number of years its superintendent was Charles (Chuck) Woodcock, a staunch NAC advocate and an outstanding critic of the kind of independent organization of the blind represented by the National Federation. There are many who will tell you that Mr. Woodcock left the Oregon School in shambles and knew when to leave the ship he had supposedly been piloting. For a time Mr. Woodcock headed the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, with considerable controversy and about the same kind of success he experienced in Oregon. It wasn't long before he jumped ship again and continued his travels. He is now at the Perkins School for the Blind, and the reports are much as they were in Oregon and Iowa.

But back to NAC: What does it do to strengthen and bolster a residential school for the blind? Does it increase public confidence and support? Does it reverse the trend of falling enrollment and bring in new students? Is it a

yardstick of academic excellence? Does it make the members of the legislature understand the needs and believe in the superiority of the institution because of its accreditation? Or does it mean (as the blind have claimed for many years) that bad schools are bad, good schools are good, and NAC accreditation not only does not help but actually hurts—diverting attention from real problems, giving a false sense of security, serving as a shield for the inept, and acting as a negative force in general? The Oregon School for the Blind (long accredited by NAC) is in serious trouble. The blind of the state are fighting to save the school, but the issue hangs in doubt. The 1985 legislature will probably make the final decision, and NAC accreditation will not be a plus. In fact, if past experience is an indicator, it will probably be a detriment.

The following article was carried in the Salem (Oregon) Statesman-Journal for May 24, 1984:

**Blind School Closure
Recommended
by John Furey
of the Statesman-Journal**

A state agency has once again called for closing the Oregon School for the Blind, setting a target date this time of June 1987.

A report released Thursday recommends the 49 resident students be placed in group homes or foster care situations.

It also proposes creating a center where 12 to 15 visually handicapped students could take intensive training on a rotating basis for six months or less.

The report, which outlined seven major recommendations, stems from an eight-month study by Teaching Research, a division of the state System of Higher Education.

Faced with strong support for keeping the Salem facility open, the 1983 Legislature requested a study of issues related to the school.

The assignment was given to the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission, which contracted with Teaching Research.

The commission also is looking into the broader topic of special education in Oregon.

Public hearings on the two matters are set for 1 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 10 p.m. next Wednesday and 9 a.m. to noon Thursday in Room 354 of the state Capitol.

Final commission recommendations on special education and the school for the blind will be made to the legislative Emergency Board July 19.

The Teaching Research recommendations include:

- Changing the mission of the school for the blind, providing short-term intensive training at a newly created center instead of serving children in a residential program.

- Establishing a visual education center, serving 12 to 15 students at a time on a rotating basis. The center would provide intensive training in communication skills, orientation and mobility.

- Phasing out educational and residential programs at the school for the blind over a two-year period, beginning in June 1985.

- Appointing "a master" to oversee the transition. This person, not to be associated with a state governmental agency, would answer directly to the Legislature.

Other recommendations call for evaluating services to these students and providing technical assistance to educators of multiply handicapped children.

Critics of the school, 700 Church St. SE, say the facility is vastly underused. Some private organizations rent space on the campus, they note.

The school's current annual operating budget totals \$1.6 million, the report states. The recommended changes would

cost \$1.7 million, including \$830,000 for services related to foster care and group homes, \$414,000 for the vision education center and \$198,000 for the master program and related expenses.

The transition period would last only two years, the report says. It says costs for the vision education center could be reduced about \$60,000 if connected to an existing state agency.

A FAMILIAR PROBLEM

NEW TRAVEL SURFACES FOR THE BLIND

On June 22, 1984, Cable News Network carried a feature on textured floor and sidewalk coverings to help the blind improve their travel safety and skills. There was nothing spectacular about the story—run-of-the-mill, here's something new to help blind people, real breakthrough. However, the damage it did (though subtle and not immediately apparent) was real and also run-of-the-mill.

In the first place the feature appeared under the heading of medicine. It was the typical, tiresome notion that anything dealing with blind people (even how they part their hair or shine their shoes) is medical or medically related. Next, if the story was to have validity and interest, it had to begin by saying that present travel aids and methods cannot do the job—so it said it. "The white cane is an imperfect travel aid."

Well, so it is, but the same is true of every other instrument and aid in any field of endeavor one can think of. Naturally (with all of the stereotypes and misconceptions about blindness) this is not the impression which is left.

The white cane (presumably also the dog guide) is inadequate as a travel aid. Textured surfaces are probably the answer. If the blind woman in the CNN feature had them, she could find stairs and other landmarks. Now she cannot. This is the damage in such reporting. It is not as simple as just smiling and shrugging off needless research projects that fatten the pockets at government expense of this or that grant recipient. It is a matter of environmental pollution, of causing a deterioration in the climate of opinion affecting the blind and the opportunities which blind people have available to them. Like many of

today's chemicals, it is all the more deadly because it so often goes unrecognized:

Bakersfield, California
June 28, 1984

Mr. Dan Rutz
Cable News Network
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Mr. Rutz:

I am writing to you regarding the "News From Medicine" feature which aired on CNN on Friday, June 22. This report concerned mobility of the blind and new developments in the field.

Since I have come to expect well-researched and carefully documented coverage from CNN, I was surprised to find some erroneous information in your story.

In summary, the report opened by stating that the white cane is an imperfect navigational aid. Research architect John Sanford at Georgia Tech is engaged in experiments with various surfaces to determine which are most easily detected by a cane. In this report, Anne Martin, one of the participants, states that she doesn't know where stairs are when using the cane. She also has difficulty in determining the location of parking lots and driveways. Although she is the only blind person heard from, the report implies that those statements are facts, not just the impressions of one blind person. In fact, when a blind person is properly trained in the use of a white cane, stairs are very easy to find; and, while possibly presenting some minor

difficulties at times, the same can be said for driveways and parking lots.

A mobility aid is only as effective as its user—and no more. More often than not, any problems encountered can be solved more easily (and at less expense to the public) with a little more time and training on the part of the blind person with a qualified mobility instructor. It makes much more sense for us, the blind, to properly use the tools and skills at our disposal than to modify the environment to suit our needs, especially when this may prove unnecessary.

As I have mentioned, only one blind person was heard from in this story. I am a member of the largest organization of the blind in this country—the National Federation of the Blind. We have the collective experience and expertise of 50,000 people in the NFB, and, although you did not choose to draw upon our resources for this report, I invite and urge you to do so in the future. You can contact our national office by writing to Kenneth Jernigan, President, National Federation of the Blind, 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230, or by phone at (301) 659-9314. The Federation will always be happy to help you with the straight facts on blindness. We have the knowledge and we would like you to share it with your viewers. By so doing, CNN can be as influential in promoting a clear understanding of blindness as you are in making the rest of the news understandable to millions of cable subscribers.

Yours truly,
Rick Lewis

BREAKING AWAY

by Joyce Scanlan

(Reprinted from the Blindside, Summer, 1984)

Blind persons who are members of the National Federation of the Blind work to paint a positive image of blindness. We say that, "The average blind person can do the average job in the average (or normal) place of business." We say: "It is respectable to be blind." Our collective experience tells us this. If we who are blind Americans are ever to take our rightful place as normal citizens, we must banish the image of the helpless and hopeless blind person.

At the same time there are other organizations purporting to "help" the blind, who persist in declaring that "Ninety percent of blind people are confined to their homes and cannot be trained to use the regular bus system." These are blind people, too, but their goal is different from ours. They wish to maintain the familiar and comfortable status quo and fear any change whatsoever. They tell the community that blindness is a tragedy and, in order to enjoy the benefits of society, blind people require numerous specialized services.

Public officials, such as legislators or the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, when confronted with blind persons from the Federation asking for their help in making needed changes, often say, "Why don't all you blind people get together?" As a further attempt to dis-

count or discredit us, they will say, "Not everyone agrees with you people in the Federation."

Blind people are not all alike; blindness is our only common characteristic. In every other way we are as diverse as any group of individuals. We cannot "get together" with those who believe the exact opposite of what we believe any more than the theists and the atheists or the Ku Klux Klan and the NAACP can "get together." Of course, all of those groups are Americans, and the same kind of logic might be employed: "Why can't all of you Americans (theists, atheists, members of the Ku Klux Klan, and members of the NAACP) get together?"

Furthermore, the fact that some people do not agree with us does not mean we're wrong. We understand that this, too, is another effort to pursue a do-nothing path by claiming that blind people do not comply with a standard which is not and cannot be applied to any other group. Not all Lutherans agree; neither do all educators. Yet, how many public officials could stand for election very long without dealing with substantive issues affecting Lutherans or educators?

The experience of thousands and thousands of blind people flies in the face of the catastrophic view of blindness. Despite the destructive statements of some blind individuals alleging that

blind persons are homebound and can be taught to do only the simplest tasks, Federationists will press forward until the myths and stereotypes about blindness have been removed. Blind people can be independent and lead meaningful lives.

After all, we are not the first minority group ever to surmount the obstacles of an opposing view and come out victorious. During the American Revolution, there were colonists (tories) who argued for remaining subjects of Great Britain; if a vote had been taken, would the proponents of independence have sustained even a bare majority? And when the Civil War was underway, weren't there some slaves who fought for the South, fearing the reprisals of their masters and perhaps gleaning comfort in the status quo?

Why, then, is it so surprising when

blind people have conflicting views when it comes to freedom and independence? The truth is simply that we must adhere to our beliefs and not be dissuaded by the fears of status quo blind individuals or public officials. We are all Americans today because the proponents of independence prevailed. Slavery is no longer legal in our country because advocates of freedom overpowered those who would oppress the human spirit and thwart the advancement of people.

Although change can be frightening, change will take place for blind people just as it did for the American colonists and the blacks who are today free from British domination and the oppression of slavery. The time will come when blind people, too, will be free, and everyone will loudly proclaim that freedom belongs to all Americans—including the blind.

If you or a friend would like to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto National Federation of the Blind, a

District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$_____ (or "_____ percent of my net estate" or "The following stocks and bonds: _____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

JUST AN AVERAGE FEDERATIONIST

by Brad Greenspan

(Note: Brad Greenspan is Vice President of the Nassau Long Island Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of New York.)

Last Sunday, August 5, was ending as evenings usually do for me. I was speaking to a very close friend over the telephone. She is blind, a successful professional, and most important, (as will be shown later) a member of the American Council of the Blind. Usually our conversations center on our respective occupations, mutual friends, and so on. This particular evening would, however, turn out to be very different. I did not know it at the time, but our innocent conversation would trigger a chain of events that would cause the most tremendous growth I had yet to experience as a Federationist.

My friend mentioned her upcoming journey to Florida to visit her parents. She was concerned about her dog guide, which would accompany her. She would be utilizing Northeastern International Airways, an inexpensive and extremely popular air carrier specializing in flights to Florida. Her dog guide was recovering from a serious illness it seemed. My friend was concerned that this, in addition to the fact that the animal would not be fond of flying under normal circumstances, would suffer further discomfort if required to wear the muzzle airline regulations required. (I must state here that the illness has had

no affect on the animal's guiding ability or rather timid personality.)

My friend could not understand the necessity of a muzzle. It fit so loosely that exiting it would be easy for the animal. She had never heard of a guide dog attacking anyone, even in fear. She was afraid the muzzle would prevent her dog guide from swallowing or breathing correctly. She knew that the only resistance her animal would exhibit to the muzzle would be a sad, baleful look.

I told my friend of the Federation philosophy—of how we were struggling to convince airlines of our first-class citizenship, of our desire to travel in peace as any other passenger would.

Her trip was scheduled for August 25. I offered to phone Northeastern for her, agreeing to refrain from mentioning her name or flight number. She concurred.

On Monday I phoned Northeastern, experiencing no problem being connected to Laura Kaplan, airline attorney. Our conversation was both pleasant and candid. It was ironic that I should phone her now, she said. She, too, had wondered why the regulation concerning muzzles was in force. She had, in fact, completed conversations just the previous week with some blind people (she didn't remember who they were) about topics such as "first-class citizenship, mistreatment by airlines," and other such topics. She promises to review the matter and phone me back.

At 12:45, August 5, 1984, Laura Kap-

lan, Attorney, Northeastern International Airways, phoned to say that their "contract of carriage" would be modified and that from this time forward muzzles would not be required.

I was overjoyed. I was exuberant—yes, I was downright overconfident. I called my friend with the good news. She was concerned that I had caused the airline problems. You see, she had just conversed with an official of ACB Dog Guide Users, Inc. She had been told that NFB needn't cause all of these problems. Just get on the plane and "bluff!" Wait until the aircraft was in flight, then simply state that the muzzle had been lost, or forgotten, or something like that. Anyway, the flight attendants just adored the dogs. They wouldn't ask anyway.

I could not believe the ridiculousness of this assertion. (I forgot my friend did not receive the Monitor.) I explained that the pilot was the one who made these decisions and that if he chose, the blind person and dog could be ejected forcibly, this occurring before takeoff. I ran down a list of Federationists upon which this injustice had been done. Unfortunately, work assignments forced us to terminate the conversation.

Northeastern was easy, I thought. I'm real good at this. Why not see what I could do with Pan Am! Why not think big, big, big! They should be conquered in less than five minutes! It was only 3:00 p.m. That would leave me two hours to "leap tall buildings at a single bound," or "bend steel in my bare hands."

In this frame of mind, I phoned Pan Am in New York. I asked for the office of Chairman C. Edward Acker. His office

switched my call to Mr. R. Cook, Attorney. It was soon apparent that Mr. Cook was as arrogant as the airline he represented. He grudgingly offered to ask someone to phone me when they had the time. I asked to be given the name of the person so that I would be able to phone back. Mr. Cook stated that, since he was the attorney at Pan Am and I was not, he would do whatever he wished his way. I asked him why then we needed his subordinates. Would he, in his capacity as chief attorney, inform me as to the reason for the muzzle requirement on Pan Am? He did not, refused any comment, and switched the call back to Mr. Acker's office.

I was next switched to customer service personnel. I was told, in a most condescending manner, that any regulation was meant for "passenger safety." They did not wish to debate me. I stated that this was an inquiry, not a debate, since I was unaware of their motives for these regulations and that we could not debate without this knowledge on my part.

Once again I was switched to the office of C. Edward Acker. I was informed that I would receive a response to my inquiry sometime in the future if I submitted a written request. No, they did not know who would respond or when.

I was dashed. My costume and cape were gone. I had been the loser in my own verbal tennis tournament. I was nothing special—just an average Federationist.

Much humbled, I received a call from Miami. Mr. Eugene Goo, international terminal manager, was on the line. He was interested in the problem. I briefly outlined my previous experience with his airline and the reasons behind elim-

inating the muzzle requirement. He was calling, he said, to inform me that his subordinate, Mr. James Frank, would be completing his present assignment shortly and would like to speak with me.

On August 22, I spoke with Mr. Frank. Interested, pleasant, and candid he expressed regret for the delay. He had been at an "Accessibility of the Skies" seminar in Colorado. He said he had heard something about this problem while traveling. Seems he had been talking to some average blind travelers, "Federationists," he believed he heard them call themselves.

His main concern seemed to be the reaction of a dog guide in the event of a crash. Would he bite in an attempt to escape? Would he break loose?

Because of the education provided to me by NFB Dog Guide Committee and Guide Dog Foundation, Smithtown, I knew that the animal would not do so. I told Mr. Frank that the only concern of the animal would be to escape with his master and that the best course of action of the sighted passenger would be to follow the dog and master.

Mr. Frank was concerned that his airline was one of the few major carriers that still required muzzles. He stated that, in all probability, the requirement would be lifted in a matter of weeks and that I would receive written

notice to that effect.

I hung up the phone stunned. I realized then that yes, I am just an average Federationist; but isn't that what we all are? We are just average, but we have an above-average task. We are charged with the task of providing to the blind of this country the average opportunity to gain the rights of an average citizen; to be able to fail or succeed just as his/her average sighted peer is able to do. Because we are but average, we must work as brothers and sisters, our predecessors providing the footprints for us to follow, we providing guidance to future generations. Yes, I'm just an average Federationist—and very proud of it.

September 7, 1984

Dear Mr. Greenspan:

I thought you would like to know that Pan American World Airways no longer requires a guide dog to wear a muzzle.

Thank you very much for your input on this subject.

Very truly yours,
James Frank, Director
Passenger Terminal Service Support
Pan American World Airways

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLIND EDUCATORS

MOVES FORWARD

The philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind is logical and easy to understand. It works. It is repeatedly demonstrated in the lives of Federation members. Why, then, is there so much negative and incorrect thinking about blindness still abroad in the land?

The answer is as logical and as easy to comprehend as the Federation's philosophy. The myths and misconceptions about blindness have been with us since the dawn of history. They have become embedded in every aspect of daily life. The Federation has only been in existence since 1940. The philosophy it teaches (even though it is provably correct) flies in the face of everything we have been taught through the ages. Measured in these terms and considering the task involved in changing the attitudes of an entire culture, our progress has been nothing short of astounding.

One of the most firmly entrenched misconceptions is that blind persons cannot be effective and competent teachers—and even if by some miracle they could, then certainly not at the elementary level. Never mind that blind persons are now teaching in the elementary grades in every part of the country and that they are doing it successfully! Never mind that the arguments used by those who say that it cannot be done have no substance and will not stand the test of reason. We find ourselves compelled to fight the battle over and over, and only gradually are we breaking

down the barriers and changing the attitudes—but we are doing it.

The teachers division of the National Federation of the Blind is the National Association of Blind Educators. Its President is Fred Schroeder, one of our ablest and most energetic leaders. Writing in the Spring/Summer, 1984, Blind Educator, which is the official publication of the National Association of Blind Educators, Fred Schroeder points up again the problem we face and the methods we must use to solve it. It is a matter of understanding, willingness to act, and coordinating our efforts through the vehicle of the organized blind movement. In the stories of Gwynne Widhalm and Adelmo Vigil we find capsulized the account of an era which is coming to an end and a new day which is bringing ever increasing hope and accomplishment to the blind. Here is what Fred says in the Blind Educator, and here also is the address which Adelmo Vigil gave at the Western Regional Conference of the National Association of Blind Educators, which was held in conjunction with the Spring, 1984, convention of the National Federation of the Blind of California. First, Fred's comments:

The National Association of Blind Educators provides the means through which educators can join together as a united force for the purpose of protecting and expanding the rights of blind

teachers. Recently I learned of a situation in Nebraska which concerned a young woman by the name of Gwynne Widhalm.

It seems that Gwynne had completed an undergraduate degree in elementary education at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska, and only lacked the completion of her student teaching assignment before being eligible for certification. She was scheduled to student teach last fall, however, experienced difficulty in being placed. Through August and September 1983, her university supervisor, Dr. Divney, advised Gwynne that she was having difficulty finding a suitable placement, however, assured Gwynne that she was not the only student for whom a placement was still being sought. Finally, on October 6, 1983, Dr. Divney informed Gwynne that she would not be allowed to student teach because, in the opinion of Dr. Divney, Gwynne's handwriting was not sufficiently legible.

On October 27, 1983, Gwynne met with Dr. Divney only to learn that Dr. Divney was firmly convinced that the blind are entirely incapable of teaching. Dr. Divney went on at length, grade level by grade level, describing why Gwynne would not be able to function adequately in an elementary setting. Perhaps in an attempt to be encouraging, Dr. Divney suggested to Gwynne that with her BA degree in education she ought to consider pursuing a Master's degree in education. Dr. Divney offered no inkling as to what Gwynne would do with a Master's degree in education while remaining uncertifiable to teach.

In March, 1984, the National Association of Blind Educators became involved

in Gwynne's case. The first step was to offer practical assistance and support in order to restore Gwynne's confidence in her ability to tackle a student teaching placement. Gwynne traveled to Shiprock, New Mexico, to spend a week with Adelmo Vigil, who is a blind third grade teacher. Gwynne learned how a blind teacher can effectively supervise a class, present material on a blackboard, and check students' work—all of which were tasks which Dr. Divney had told her could not be accomplished by a blind teacher. By the end of the week, Gwynne was teaching a number of subjects to the students while receiving feedback and encouragement from Adelmo. The week ended with a renewal of Gwynne's determination and resolve to become certified. Gwynne now plans to student teach in the fall of 1984, and is confident in the knowledge that blind teachers throughout the nation are ready to stand by her as she completes her teacher training.

Student teaching is a time for a young professional to develop and refine classroom techniques in preparation for a career in teaching. Generally, the student teacher's university supervisor provides counseling and encouragement while offering suggestions concerning curricula, materials, and classroom management strategies. It is outrageous that a blind person can be barred from pursuing a teaching career through the prejudice of one individual. As has often been said in the past, if one of us falls victim to discrimination, then none of us is safe from the oppression and lost opportunities of discrimination.

TEACHING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by Adelmo Vigil

(Note: The following address was delivered on Thursday, April 12, 1984, at the Western Regional Conference of the National Association of Blind Educators in Sacramento, California. It is reprinted from the Spring/Summer, 1984, Blind Educator, which is the official publication of the National Association of Blind Educators, a division of the National Federation of the Blind.)

It is a pleasure to be here this morning and be able to relate some of my experiences teaching in a public school classroom. I want to start off by telling you about my teacher training experience at Western New Mexico University in Silver City. The first question everybody asked me was whether I was planning to do my student teaching assignment at the school for the blind. When I said no, they asked how would I be able to teach in a regular classroom. I told them to let me get through school first and I would figure out ways of getting the job done.

I met a third-grade teacher who believed in my ability to teach. I was able to work out my student teaching placement with him. I completed my student teaching in the spring of 1977 and decided to continue living in the Silver City area. I applied for a teaching position with the local district but received no response. I contacted the personnel director, who agreed to interview me but never got

back to me to set up an interview. Finally, I went and saw the superintendent who told me that hiring decisions were made individually by each school principal. I began interviewing and learned that none of the principals in the district had ever been told of my application by the personnel department. At that time I did not know of the existence of the National Federation of the Blind, and so I went to a private attorney for help. He suggested that I take my case before the State Human Rights Commission. When the Human Rights Commission found that the district had discriminated against me, the district decided to offer me a teaching position.

By the time the matter was settled, I had already accepted a position teaching Title I math in Shiprock, New Mexico. I stayed in this position for three years but always wished I could get into teaching in a regular class. When I asked my principal about a change in assignment, he asked me if I would be interested in teaching in an open space setting where four classes totaling 120 students were combined. I told him that I thought I might have trouble teaching in the open space but still wanted very much to teach regular third grade. What do you suppose he did? The next year my principal moved all third grade classes to the open space. Nevertheless, when an opening came up for a third grade teacher, I asked for a transfer even though it meant teaching in the open

space.

It was hard in a way because even though I could control my kids, some of the other teachers had trouble controlling their kids which made it difficult to hear over the noise of the other kids and pencil sharpeners. I did not particularly enjoy the situation, but I enjoyed teaching third grade. I taught in the open space for a year and the following year transferred to another school where I have now been for the last three years teaching third grade in a regular setting. I have been teaching a total of seven years now and it has not always been easy, but I believe it is up to us to take on a job and pull our own load. We can not expect others to do our work for us. We have got to do it for ourselves.

Now let me relate to you a situation in which I have recently been involved concerning Gwynne Widhalm, a student at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska. Gwynne's university supervisor, Dr. Divney, would not let her student teach and sent her a letter outlining the numerous reasons why. As I read Dr. Divney's letter, I began to get mad because it was clear that Dr. Divney feels that a blind person is incapable of teaching. When discussing the possibility of assigning Gwynne to a second grade class, Dr. Divney stated, "Discipline would become even more difficult. As children become more adept at imitating voices, at changing chairs and seats, as active games are played on the playground, this monitoring and discipline would be extremely difficult when you depend on sound to identify a discipline problem in the room." Dr. Divney's words show a complete lack of understanding about the nature of disci-

pline. Discipline is not maintained by sight but by the relationship a teacher has with his or her students. At the beginning of the year I will say to the kids, "In my classroom we go by my rules. If other teachers run their classes differently, that is up to them." I ask the kids, "Do you want to be the best class in this school and, if so, are you willing to work at it?" As time goes on they begin believing in themselves and believing that they are the best class in the school. It does not matter whether anyone else believes they are the best class. They believe it and work together and treat each other and me with respect. Learning to respect one another and work together is very important and is something too often overlooked by other teachers.

In her letter, Dr. Divney also stated, "Children love to test the teacher. It would be very easy for a child to cause a disturbance that was completely noiseless. Gwynne would not hear the discipline difficulty that was arising." What Dr. Divney is forgetting is that the blind teacher is in a room full of children who can and do report to the teacher if another student has matches and is planning to burn down the school. This type of relationship with your students is equally important for sighted teachers and blind teachers, since the sighted teacher cannot possibly be watching all children at all times. A teacher working with a reading group in the back of the room cannot be watching everything that is going on in the rest of the class. In my class I assign students to serve as class leaders. Each week we change leaders. During an activity if a student is talking, the leader will write the student's name

on the board and later I will discuss with the student why he or she was talking. My principal liked the way the leader system was working in my classroom and decided to expand the program schoolwide. Since third grade is the highest grade at my school, during recess the leader from each of the third grade classes assists the teacher on duty with monitoring the playground. The leaders also assist in the cafeteria, which all the teachers find to be a great help. The system is good for the children. It makes them feel responsible and important.

Another area which Dr. Divney identified as being impossible for Gwynne to manage was the use of the blackboard. Dr. Divney stated, "Much of the time in the meeting was used in a discussion of the importance of blackboard work in the third grade. Many of the lessons, the opening exercises, the mathematics, as well as handwriting, is presented on the blackboard for children in the third grade. They work at the blackboard. It would be difficult for Gwynne to present material to the children using the medium of the blackboard...It was mentioned in the course of the conversation that one-third of the children learn visually...and one-third of the children learn kinesthetically. If all lessons were presented auditorially...it would be to the advantage of one-third of the children. Two-thirds of the children would not be grasping the material..." Let us apply Dr. Divney's thinking another way. If a blind teacher can only teach through the auditory modality thereby excluding two-thirds of the class from learning, then is the sighted teacher only capable of teaching through the visual modality thereby also exclud-

ing two-thirds of the students from the learning process? If a teacher writes an assignment on the board, is he or she not thereby excluding those children who learn by the auditory and kinesthetic modalities? What about the teacher who relies heavily on worksheets? A teacher at my school told me that she goes through 150-175 worksheets daily, which figures out to seven or eight worksheets for each child each day. This is in addition to the student's workbooks. So what happens to the child who learns by hearing? What happens to the child who learns by doing?

In my classroom the emphasis is on the children learning to take responsibility for themselves. Children will live up to your expectations of them. I tell my children if they have a question they can come up and ask me, but they better not expect me to read the directions to them. I expect them to read the directions for themselves, not because I am blind, but because it is important for them to take that responsibility for themselves. Then if they need help understanding the directions, I will explain the directions to them.

Grading papers is another problem that Dr. Divney brought up. She said, "Grading papers would be a task that would need to be taken home and done by someone else at night. This means that when Gwynne brought the papers back to the schoolroom the next day it would be very difficult for her to answer the questions the children would raise about the marks on their papers because someone else had marked the papers. Someone else had scored and graded them. So that Gwynne would have great difficulty answering the questions of the children and showing them what would be the cor-

rect procedure to follow on their written work, paperwork, seat work." Again, Dr. Divney's comments only reflect her deep-seated negative attitudes toward blindness. Before I hand back a student's paper, I go through it to see where the student is having problems. For example, in math I note whether the student is having trouble remembering to carry or remembering to add in the number carried. When I hand back papers, I will let a student know that he or she is having trouble so that I can get with the student later and work with him or her on solving the problem. I have been using this system successfully for seven years. I do not know why Dr. Divney thinks a blind teacher would not be able to explain a problem to a student from the material that the blind teacher has taught. In fact, it is even better if the child is able to go through and analyze his or her own mistakes rather than always having the teacher explain the problem to the child.

Then Dr. Divney brought up the issue of recordkeeping. She said, "To keep a teacher's grade book requires marking in very small squares. It would be extremely difficult for Gwynne to keep the type of grade and attendance book that is routinely asked for teachers to keep." Dr. Divney's use of the word routinely lends insight to her attitudes toward teaching. To Dr. Divney there is

no room for different styles among teachers. There is only one way to carry out each duty. If my district were to require me to maintain a regular grade book, then I would find a way to get that done. The way I get the job done is nobody's concern but my own. As long as I can fulfill the requirements of my district, then that is all that is important.

Supervision of my children out of the classroom is not a problem. Dr. Divney expressed concern about Gwynne's supervising children on the playground. As I said earlier, this is another situation where I use the class leaders to help with the monitoring. Sometimes when my kids finish their work I will take them outside to play ball. I am not afraid that they will hurt themselves and besides if a student does get hurt, a sighted teacher might see the accident happen, but that does not mean the teacher would be able to prevent the accident.

I feel that the only way to improve the situation of negative attitudes toward blind teachers such as those of Dr. Divney is for more blind people to enter the teaching profession. Through the National Federation of the Blind and its division, the National Association of Blind Educators, we can work together to eliminate discrimination toward blind teachers.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S MAILBASKET

COMMENTS ABOUT THE MULTIPLY HANDICAPPED BLIND

Las Cruces, New Mexico
July, 1984

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

I wish to tell you the story firsthand about how the National Federation of the Blind treats the multiply handicapped blind. NAC goes around rationalizing the sheltered workshop by saying that the NFB doesn't care about multiply handicapped blind people, but that is not true. When I began to have trouble in 1980 and 1981 with Services for the Blind, Linda Miller, Fred Schroeder, and Joe Cordova helped me and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation backed off. I was terminated from a CETA job at the recommendation of DVR in 1981. Joe felt that rather than be terminated from my position I should receive help for the emotional condition. Joe even made arrangements for me to attend a program in Albuquerque. The battle kept on going. We had many skirmishes with DVR, and Fred and Joe and Linda always fought on my behalf like the time that Mrs. Coles, my counselor wished to place me in the sheltered workshop or like the time when I was cussed and abused by one of the agency field teachers when they had some mobility arranged for me.

What about the latest battle. The one involving the sales job. I was selling General Electric light bulbs for a lighting company. This was the final job opportunity for me. If I messed up this one, it would be the shop or a 28

closure for sure or so Mrs. Coles thought. I was not able to keep the job, and again Fred Schroeder helped me. Not only did she not close my case, but thanks to Fred I was able to keep the Visualtek which was purchased for the job.

I am learning disabled as well as being blind. I became blind at birth due to a blood clot in the brain. Some slight damage occurred with the fine motor coordination. I find the Visualtek useful in work, and Fred was aware of that and that is why he fought hard for me to get it. We, the members of the NFB, are not against the blind people with other handicaps receiving what they need. We just want the public to realize that the real problem of blindness is not primarily the blindness but the way people look at it. It is not eyes but attitudes that keep us from having jobs—our own attitudes as much as the attitude of the public. I hope that you will publish this account in the Braille Monitor, because I think that facts need to be told that the Federation does care about the multiply handicapped blind. It is a great pleasure to belong to the National Federation of the Blind, for we are all brothers and sisters and share love for each other as well as for all blind people in and out of the movement alike.

Mike Ruddy

THE TROUBLE WITH SIMULATION

by Charles E. Hallenbeck

(Note: The following article is reprinted from the Summer, 1984, Bulletin of the Association on Handicapped Student Service Programs in Post-Secondary Education. Professor Hallenbeck is one of the most perceptive people we know. He goes straight to the heart of a matter; he knows what he thinks; and he tells it like it is. He does not pussy-foot around or skirt the issue but lays it on the line. We wish there were more like him.)

There was a practice in Victorian England, popular among the gentry, called "poor-peopling on Wednesday afternoons." It was a practice about which Charles Dickens wrote most eloquently. It did very little for the "poor people," but it was very rewarding for the gentry who practiced it.

I was reminded of that practice recently when a friend telephoned to read me an item from the local paper. The 28th annual program of the Kansas Association for Retarded Citizens had just been held in Lawrence, and one of its features caught the attention of a reporter. The article, entitled "Group Gets Feel of Handicaps," told of a workshop in which a dozen people participated.

According to the article, "first they were blind, then mute, then they lost the ability to speak and write properly." They completed the workshop "knowing they would not be handicapped when

the two hours were over," (a remarkable guarantee), "and for some, the most common feeling afterward was relief, because the handicaps they experienced were only temporary." The article went on to say that "even in the artificial setting (of simulated disabilities), participants experienced very real fear, anger, and frustration, often felt by the handicapped." Participants reported that because of their simulated handicaps, their priorities had changed. "Instead of being concerned with the quality of their work," they said, "they were primarily concerned with just finishing it."

My friend knew that the article would concern me, as it did her. As a psychologist and a blind person, I have been a critic of the practice of simulating blindness, as in the so-called "trust walk" popular on many college campuses. With no training in the alternative techniques of blindness, persons who wear blindfolds are forced to "trust" in the help of others with unobstructed vision. This practice usually strengthens the misconception which most people have about the blind. In fact, the trust walk is designed to teach sighted persons about dependence, and not about blindness. The trust walk is one of the standard techniques of human relations training, where it was only an accidental connection with blindness or blind persons. If, in the process of learning about dependence and

trust, harmful attitudes about blindness are reinforced, that is often regarded as a "cost" well worth the "benefit" of the practice. The Helping Hand Strikes Again!

The article in our local paper convinces me once again that there is a great deal of mischief being created by those charged with the task of providing services to others. In expressing this opinion, I run the risk of revealing the "fear, anger, and frustration," which the experts tell us is characteristic of the "handicapped." However, with unemployment among adult blind persons of working age still running at seventy percent, statements such as those concerning the quality of work by the blind must be challenged. I hope that even if I had the x-ray vision of Clark Kent I would still experience the fear, anger, and frustration that this practice deserves.

I believe that with proper training in the alternative techniques of blindness and given a fair opportunity to compete, the blind can function independently as equals in this sighted society. Blindness can be reduced to an inconvenience or nuisance and need not be carried around as a crushing burden to turn life into tragedy and failure. I believe in

myself and look upon my blindness as just another characteristic, much like being from New York, or weighing 160 pounds. I manage to lead a productive and gratifying life in spite of my weight, my place of birth, or my blindness.

How, then, shall sighted people learn about blindness if not by putting on blindfolds and frightening themselves? That is easy. Get to know someone who is blind. Say hello to the next blind person you encounter on the street, without asking him or her if you can be of help. The blind are not constantly in need of help. Read about the organized blind movement. It has been on the national scene since 1940 and provides a clear voice on matters affecting the blind. There is no need to be afraid or to play parlor games. White persons do not learn about black persons or the civil rights movement by simulating blacks, nor do men learn about women or the women's movement by simulating women. The real trouble with simulation is that it only teaches one what one already knows, and prevents one from learning anything new. Shall we stand in front of a mirror and marvel at ourselves, or in front of an open window and learn what it is like out there?

CALIFORNIA VENDING DECISION HAS IMPLICATIONS

FOR ALL OF RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD PROGRAM

The Federal Register for April 24, 1984, contains on page 17562 material of special interest to blind vendors and other members of the organized blind

movement. It is as follows:

Department of Education
Office of Special Education

**and Rehabilitative Services
Arbitration Panel Decision
Under the
Randolph-Sheppard Act**

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of Arbitration Panel Decision under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

Summary: Notice is hereby given that on November 25, 1981, an arbitration panel rendered a decision in the matter of the Department of Rehabilitation, State Licensing Agency of the State of California vs. United States Postal Service. This panel was convened by the Secretary of the Department of Education pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 107d-1(b), upon receipt of a complaint filed by the Department of Rehabilitation of the State of California on June 5, 1980. Under this section of the Act, a State licensing agency which determines that a Federal property managing agency is failing to comply with the Act or implementing regulations may request the Secretary to convene an arbitration panel to resolve the dispute.

For Further Information Contact: Director, Division for Blind and Visually Impaired, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Room 3216, Mary E. Switzer Building, Washington, D.C. 20202. Area Code (202) 732-1316 or TTY (202) 732-1298. The full text of the arbitration panel decision can be obtained from this office.

Dated: April 19, 1984.

Madeleine Will

Assistant Secretary,

Office of Special Education

and Rehabilitative Services

Arbitration Panel Decision

The Department of Rehabilitation, State licensing agency of the State of California, filed a complaint with the then Department of Health, Education, and Welfare against the United States Postal Service concerning compliance with 20 U.S.C. Section 107d-3 of the Randolph-Sheppard Act, as amended, which specifies the manner in which income from vending machines on Federal property is to be shared with the blind vendor on the premises or the State licensing agency. The complainant pursued the grievance consistent with the Randolph-Sheppard Act's procedures applicable to arbitrations and with Department interim policies and procedures.

The issue before the arbitration panel was whether the so-called "break-even" policy of the Postal Service, as it pertained to certain vended cafeterias and lunchrooms, violated the income sharing provisions of the statute. The break-even policy at issue was set forth in Postal Service Food Service regulations and read as follows:

"Manual cafeteria operations and/or associated vending machines that are established for this purpose shall be operated on a break-even basis in order to provide employees wholesome food at the lowest practicable cost. Funds generated by such operations shall not be turned over to employee social and recreational committees, but shall be redistributed to lunchroom patrons through reduced food costs for items sold or vended."

The Postal Service argued that the Act contains no express provision requiring

the production of vending machine income or the management of Federal agency vending as a business with a profit making motive.

The Department of Rehabilitation argued that there is implicit in the Act the contemplation of Congress that income would be generated and therefore that the break-even policy frustrates Congressional intent by eliminating the possibility of generating income.

The Panel concluded, one member dissenting, that the break-even policy is inconsistent with the intent of the Act when applied to fully vended facilities, but that it is not unreasonable for the Postal Service to apply its policy to partly manual and partly vended cafeterias. In reaching its conclusion, the

Panel relied in part on legislative history which suggested to the Panel that Congress was concerned with the distribution of income from vending machines to the blind as well as with increasing job opportunities for the blind. Since the three vending facilities involved in the present case were wholly vended, the Panel concluded that with respect to them, the Postal Service's policy was violative of the Act.

The Panel made its award prospectively and denied the request of the Department of Rehabilitation for a money award of damages.

The arbitration panel decision does not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Education.

PROCLAMATION BY GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK

The National Federation of the Blind of New York State has established itself as a prime-mover in promoting independence and pride among persons who are blind. New York members have been participants in the 50,000-strong nationwide network of individuals striving to secure equal rights and opportunities for visually impaired persons in all spheres of political, cultural, social, economic and religious life.

Now in its 28th year, the New York affiliate was instrumental in gaining passage of 1974 legislation which amended the State's Human Rights Law to extend its provisions to persons with disabilities.

Members continue to captivate statewide attention and support of their endeavors to gain legislation and to nurture the type of attitudinal awareness required for blind persons to interact as fully integrated, contributing and responsible members of the State's communities.

Blindness need not be a deterrent to personal growth and achievement, as thousands of blind persons who actively participate in various walks of life can attest. Invaluable contributions to the diversity and viability of New York State have been made by people who are blind. They have enriched, in meaningful ways, the quality of life shared by

all New Yorkers.

Our recognition and support of the Federation's ongoing commitment to inspire individuals who are blind to seek and secure their rightful place within society is indeed warranted.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mario M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim the month of October, 1984, as

National Federation of the Blind Month

in New York State.

Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this fifteenth day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and eighty-four.

SOUTH END'S BLIND RENI JACKSON RANKS AMONG NATION'S TOP GOALBALL SCORERS

(Note: The following article by Grace Schneider appeared in the Louisville Times of July 11, 1984. Reni Jackson is one of the group of rising leaders in the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky.)

The best offensive goalball player in the United States is South Louisville's Reni Jackson.

But to most regulars at the Hall of Justice, at Sixth and Jefferson Streets, Jackson is just one of the blind vendors who operate the candy counter and keep the building's 26 vending machines filled with soft drinks and snacks.

Jackson, 33, a Valley Station native who lives on Beecher Street near Wyandotte Park, also is a man with a good sense of humor and vivid imagination.

He recently returned from a trip to the International Games for the Disabled in Nassau County, New York, where he took second place in the javelin throw

and was a member of the championship goalball team that defeated Egypt in the finals.

Goalball is a team sport played on a hardwood floor roughly the size of a volleyball court. Three players position themselves at each end of the court and attempt to score points by rolling a four-pound rubber ball—with bells inside—across their opponents' end line. All players are blindfolded to equalize their handicaps.

The players at the other end listen for the ball and scramble across the floor to stop it before it crosses the end line.

The game requires the quick movements of a soccer goalie, a good return roll and a lot of mental strategy to outsmart the defenders, said Jackson, who is 6 feet 4 inches tall and weighs 230 pounds.

Feeling like minor celebrities after the dramatic final against the Egypt-

ians, Jackson and a teammate laughed over the thought of getting a beer company such as Miller or Budweiser to include them—"famous goalball players"—in their commercials featuring noted sports figures.

"You know, I still think I'm going to call one of those beer companies," said Jackson, smiling and half-serious. "They had a bullfighter on one of those commercials. Now who ever heard of that bullfighter? They could have us on, too."

Though he likes to joke about it, Jackson is adamant about recognizing blind athletes for their achievements.

Jackson became legally blind at 15 because of a rare disorder that caused his eyesight to deteriorate. But he captured second place in the 175-pound weight class in the state high school wrestling tournament in his senior year at Kentucky School for the Blind in 1970.

He remained active athletically after high school by playing basketball and commuting to work on his bicycle. Although he can't see traffic signals, Jackson's vision allows him to see out of the corners of his eyes, he said.

In 1978, while attending a competition between disabled athletes from the United States and Canada in DeKalb, Illinois, Jackson, who had gone to throw the javelin, was asked to fill in for a goalball player who was unable to make the trip.

"I loved it. It was a lot harder than I thought it would be," Jackson said.

Even though his team lost 5-4, Jackson was inspired by the game. He formed his own goalball team with a group of friends from the Kentucky School for the Blind. His sighted brother Dean, 32, is

the coach and manager.

Gary Mudd, of Crestwood, is the team's center; Sam Parker, of Duncan Avenue in Portland, plays right wing; Kenneth Jones, of West Muhammad Ali Boulevard, and Duane Moore, of Hite Avenue in Crescent Hill, are substitutes.

During the goalball season from October to June, the team—the only one of its kind in Kentucky—plays squads from other states in tournaments.

The Kentucky Bourbons, as they're called, took second place in the national competition sponsored by the United States Association of Blind Athletes during the last two years.

Dean Jackson admits he may be biased in favor of his brother's abilities. "We have some very good players on our team, but we really do rely on Reni's ability to throw the ball. We've really benefited from his speed and accuracy," said Jackson, who lives on Mitchell Lane in Valley Station.

"From a coaching and an officiating standpoint, he's one of the best I've seen. If he stays healthy, he'll be on international teams for many years to come," he said.

Reni Jackson's brother is just one of his fans. Two years ago in the 20-nation World Games in Indianapolis, Jackson was named the best offensive goalball player in the world.

His play at left wing in national tournaments in recent years earned him an invitation to the International Games. He took a month of vacation from his job at the Hall of Justice and joined about 60 other blind athletes from a week-long training camp in Macomb, Illinois, and the six-day competition in New York last month.

After a qualifying round in which

teams compiled points in order to advance to the final, the American team beat Italy, 2-1, in a semi-final game. Jackson scored the winning goal in the first five-minute half.

Then in a dramatic final game, the U.S. team locked horns with Egypt. Neither team scored during the regulation game or the two three-minute overtime periods that followed.

Then, under the sudden-death rules, players were paired one-on-one and given a chance to score a goal for their team. The first member of the U.S. team failed to score.

Jackson, who played second in the four-player line-up, caught his opponent's toss and sent the ball cross-court for a goal. The teammate after him also scored, giving the U.S. team the 2-0 victory.

Jackson, whose first name is pronounced re-NAY, said that someday he'd

like to coach an international goalball team. And he'd like to get more blind people involved in the sport.

But now that the goalball season is over until fall, he wants to spend time with his wife, Mary Catherine, and his daughter, Dana, 9, who will be a fourth-grader at Holy Name Catholic School, 2917 S. Fourth Street.

And in the meantime, he's glad to tell anyone he meets about his favorite sport because the more people—sighted and blind alike—who know about athletics for the blind, the fewer stereotypes each group will have, he said.

People tend "to think about the (blind) man on the corner selling pencils. People would be surprised how good blind athletes really are. We're just not drawing Social Security and SSI (Supplemental Security Income). We're making a living, raising our families and playing hard sports."

FACTS FROM THE FILES

by Gerald Paice

It is estimated that there are in the neighborhood of 575,000 blind people in our nation today and that approximately 44,000 Americans lose their eyesight each year.

Joyce Scanlan, familiar to all Monitor readers, organized the Minnesota chapter of our NFB Student Division in 1971 and was elected Vice President of the NFB of Minnesota in 1972. In 1973 she became

President of that organization and the same year was appointed to a newly created Minnesota Commission for the Handicapped, being the only blind representative of a consumer organization on the Commission's Board. Joyce holds a B.A. degree in English and Latin and an M.A. degree in English and History. On the national level she has gained recognition as a valued member of our NFB

Board of Directors.

According to those who arranged and ran it, one of the accomplishments of the New Orleans Seminar in 1956 sponsored by the federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the American Foundation for the Blind was the identification of four basic areas of services to the blind offered by rehabilitation centers throughout the land. They were listed as follows: medical, psychological, social, and vocational. Note the priority in the listing and give it further thought. By the way, the voice of the consumer, the average blind person in the nation, was conspicuously absent. Strangely enough, it still is.

"Federationism is many things to many men. First of all, it is an indispensable means of collective self-expression, a magaphone through which the blind may speak their minds and voice their demands and be assured of a hearing."—Jacobus tenBroek.

Only John Milton, who lived in the 1660's, ranks with Homer as an author of great epic poetry. Milton's greatest works were written after he became blind.

The first blind person to be employed by the Baltimore City Bureau of Recreation was a Federationist. After receiving his formal training in Baltimore at the Peabody Conservatory of Music as a Dale Carnegie scholarship student, he attended Morgan State College as the recipient of four full scholarships, earning his Bachelor of Science degree as an Education major with emphasis on English and music. His accomplishments as a dedicated worker in our Federation continue to be an inspiration to all of us who are concerned. We speak of the late John T. McCraw.

The first special city ordinances regarding the use of the white cane were adopted in this country in 1930. The white cane campaign then became national in scope. Today, all of the fifty states have White Cane Laws.

"The Federation has been above all things the repository of faith, the faith of tens of thousands without sight and otherwise without a voice. It has become a symbol, a living proof of the collective rationality and responsibility of blind men and women, of their capacity to think and move and to speak for themselves, to be self-activated, self-disciplined, and self-governing; in a word, to be normal. Our failure is the death of that idea; our success is the vindication of that faith."—Jacobus tenBroek—The First Thirty Years.

In his study involving blind teachers, Dr. Huntington found that of the thirty-two schools contacted, only five reported less than average discipline. Blind teachers who were consulted felt that the answer was mutual respect and confidence. They noted further that their various teaching techniques were an important factor in making the high rate of discipline a reality.

NFB's National Association of Blind Secretaries and Transcribers came into existence in 1971 with Anita O'Shea of Massachusetts serving as its first President. Its purpose throughout the years has been to promote the training, advance the interests, and expand the opportunities for blind secretaries and transcribers in the various fields in which they are commonly employed, including the law, medicine, insurance, research, etc.

"Any disadvantaged group must be heard with its own voice, must lead in the

achievement of its own salvation. Accomplishments are made of dreams and

drudgeries, of hope and hard work."—President Kenneth Jernigan.

WYANT NAMED HEAD OF VA'S

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND COUNSELING SERVICE

(Note: Dr. Dennis Wyant is no stranger to members of the National Federation of the Blind. He has attended many of our conventions and has been a Federationist for more than a decade. He is one of the stabilizing factors in the otherwise shaky rehabilitation system of the nation, which continues to grow and grow and slow and slow. The following press release was issued March 21, 1984, by the Veterans Administration):

Dr. Dennis R. Wyant has been named director of the Veterans Administration's Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling Service by VA Administrator Harry N. Walters.

He succeeds Stephen L. Lemons, who was appointed director of the VA regional office in Waco, Texas.

Wyant, a disabled Vietnam-Era veteran, has been involved in programs for handicapped veterans for more than a decade. Prior to his appointment he served as a program analyst with the VA's Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service.

A native of Parsons, Kansas, Wyant was the national field service director for the Blind Veterans Association from 1973 - 1975, and later served as the

organization's national commander.

Wyant, a certified rehabilitation counselor, developed rehabilitation policies for the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals.

From 1978 to 1981, he served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans Employment. He was also a special assistant to a former Administrator of Veterans Affairs.

As the VA's director of vocational rehabilitation, Wyant also will assist in formulating laws governing rehabilitation programs for the nation's veterans. This will include providing job counseling, planning, placement, and adjustment to enable disabled veterans to obtain and maintain suitable employment and to provide assistance necessary to achieve maximum independence in daily living.

More than 16,000 disabled veterans are receiving vocational rehabilitation services from the VA and another 60,000 veterans and dependents received educational training and counseling assistance during the past year.

Wyant received his doctorate degree in education from the University of Cincinnati.

nati in 1974. He has a Bachelor's degree from Southwest Missouri State University and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio.

He is married to the former Julia Turitz of Hackensack, New Jersey. They reside in Washington, D.C., with their five children.

RECIPES

BACARDI RUM CAKE

by Susan Myrick

(Note: Miss Myrick, as Federationists know, is President Jernigan's secretary. However, her skills are not limited to the computer, the typewriter, and the steno pad. She is a cook of no mean ability, as witness the following recipe.)

1/2 cup Bacardi dark rum (80 proof)

Note If using cake mix with pudding already in it, omit instant pudding, use 3 eggs instead of 4, and 1/3 cup of oil instead of 1/2.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease and flour ten-inch tube or 12-cup bundt pan. Sprinkle nuts over bottom of pan. Mix all cake ingredients together. Pour batter over nuts. Bake one hour. Cool. Invert on serving plate. Prick top. Spoon and brush glaze over top and sides. Allow cake to absorb glaze. Repeat until glaze is used up.

Glaze Melt butter in sauce pan. Stir in water and sugar. Boil 15 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in rum.

Optional Decorate with border of sugar frosting or whipped cream.

Cake

1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
1 18-oz. package yellow cake mix
1 3 3/4 oz. package jello vanilla instant pudding and pie filling
4 eggs
1/2 cup cold water
1/2 cup Wesson Oil
1/2 cup Bacardi dark rum (80 proof)

Glaze

1/4 pound butter
1/4 cup water
1 cup granulated sugar

PINEAPPLE DELIGHT

by Anna Marklund

(Note: Karen Mayry sends the following comment: "Anna is 82 and a vital member of the NFB of South Dakota Black Hills Chapter. She is a wonderful cook!")

1 package Duncan Hines yellow cake mix
1 tall can crushed pineapple
1 small package vanilla instant pudding mix
1 9-oz. container Cool Whip

Mix and bake cake according to directions. While still slightly warm, poke holes in cake with straw. Pour over the can of pineapple—juice included. Mix vanilla pudding using 1 1/2 cups milk instead of 2 cups. Fold Cool Whip into pudding. Spread over pineapple. Sprinkle shredded coconut on top. Refrigerate for several hours or over night. Yummy and light.

RHUBARB CAKE

by Larry Kettner

(Note: Larry Kettner needs no introduction to Federationists. If he does, read your back Monitors. Not only does he know how to deal with workshop officials, but he also swings a mean cake knife.)

1 package yellow or white cake mix
5 cups cut rhubarb

1 cup white sugar
1 pt. whipping cream

Mix cake as directions on package indicate. Pour into 9 by 13 inch cake pan. Mix cut rhubarb with one cup sugar and spread on top of cake. Pour over entire mixture one pint whipping cream. Bake in 350 degree oven for one hour.

MONITOR MINIATURES * * * * *****Authors Take Note:**

Mrs. Barbara Cheadle, P.O. Box 1947, Boise, Idaho, is the editor of Future Reflections. She writes as follows:

"I want to publish some good short stories for children or teens (grades K-12) in Future Reflections, the NFB magazine for parents of blind children. The stories should be no more than 2,500 to 3,000 words, and they must feature a character (adult or child) who is blind. The theme or plot need not deal with blindness at all, but a major character must be blind.

"Stories such as these are very rare. Most stories or books for children that deal with blindness at all tend to deal with it in a negative manner. Also, the plot usually totally revolves about the person's blindness. Seldom are blind persons portrayed in such a way that we understand that blindness is merely one of many characteristics of that individual.

"Role models—live ones, or ones from literature—can be very important to the development of a positive self-image among blind youngsters. I challenge aspiring writers among the Federation to meet this need and help build a positive and realistic image of blindness in children's literature."

****Lexis and Nexis:**

Maryland Computer Services recently issued the following press release:

"Newly developed software and a talking computer make it possible for blind people to access two of the country's largest and most popular legal, general news and business information retrieval services.

"Mead Data Central's approval of Maryland Computer Services, Inc.'s (MCS) Information Thru Speech (I.T.S.) talking microcomputer and software make it possible for the blind to use Lexis and Nexis public databases.

"The specially designed software is included free with an I.T.S. computer. The user pays only for Mead Data's monthly subscription fees and per-use time charge.

"It used to be extremely difficult and time consuming for blind professionals or students to get the information they needed to do their work," said MCS' Marketing Manager, Jackie Downes. "They either had to rely on someone else to read to them or wait until something was available on tape."

"Now blind people can independently get what they need to compete on a near equal footing with their sighted peers."

"Working through a telephone modem, MCS's Information Thru Speech (I.T.S.) talking computer system accesses the desired information and 'speaks' it as it appears on the screen. Text can be reviewed a word, sentence, or full page at a time.

"Lexis and Nexis are services of Mead Data Central, a division of the Mead Corporation, Dayton, Ohio.

"Maryland Computer Services, Inc. markets the I.T.S. and a full line of state-of-the-art microcomputer-based productivity tools for the blind, including the Cranmer Modified Perkins Brailier, the Thiel high-speed Braille embosser, the Ready Reader optical character reader and speech oriented software.

"For more information about how to access Lexis and Nexis through the I.T.S. talking computer call 301-879-

3366 or write to MCS, 2010 Rock Spring Road, Forest Hill, Maryland 21050."

****Congratulations:**

Our congratulations go to Mrs. ten-Broek, who has recently become a grandmother again. She writes:

"Just before noon on Wednesday (August 15) Janne and Nic became parents of an eight pound, ten ounce boy named Jens. He joins Eric, now two and a half. This makes eight grandchildren—and only one girl."

****Christmas Cards:**

The Delta Gamma Foundation for Visually Impaired Children of St. Louis, Missouri, has asked that we carry the following announcement:

"The Delta Gamma Foundation for Visually Impaired Children of St. Louis, Missouri, Inc. is a non-profit organization that aids blind and visually impaired children from birth through childhood. The Foundation provides in-home counseling, motor development, parent education, and a preschool program for two and three year olds. There is no charge to parents for these services.

"Part of the funding for the Foundation is through sale of its specially designed and printed Brailled Christmas card. The 1984 card features a stylized Christmas tree whose branches are decorated with the expression 'Peace on Earth, Goodwill Toward men, Amen, Amen.' Cardinals drape festive garlands of holly over the tree. The inside message, printed in red and Brailled underneath, reads 'The Season for Thoughtfulness.' The card is printed in shades of green and red on heavy white stock.

"Any number of cards may be ordered at 40 cents per card. Please include \$2.50

to cover postage and handling. Cards ordered before November 19th may be imprinted with your name, up to two lines. Imprinting is an additional charge of \$5.00 for 50 imprintings; \$5.75 for 75 imprintings; and \$6.00 for 100 imprintings. Mail orders to Delta Gamma Foundation of St. Louis, 9313 Manchester Road, Suite 101, St. Louis, Missouri 63119."

****Cane Bank for Kids:**

The May 30, 1984, Omaha World-Herald carries the following article:

**Blind Children to Get
Free White Canes**

Des Moines (AP)—A statewide program to assist Iowa's blind children with a white cane bank has been announced by the Iowa Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind.

Bob Yoder, president of the Iowa Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation, said the cane bank would provide blind children with white canes free of charge, replacing canes with larger sizes as the children grow.

The blind use the white canes to seek out obstructions and find their way as they walk as well as a means of identifying themselves as blind to other pedestrians and motorists.

Information on the children's cane bank may be obtained from Curtis Wilmoughby, 2711 54th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

****Talking Scale, Talking Watch:**

Cambridge, Massachusetts
June 28, 1984

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

As you may know, B.I.T. Corporation, the developer of the BIT Talkman, has begun to offer its products directly to consumers. Our catalog, available in large print, Braille, and cassette, contains a select line of innovative electronic products.

The most exciting products are a talking scale and a talking watch. The Weight Talker Scale has an automatic zero setting, five memories, volume control, cassette instructions, and a one year warranty from B.I.T. Its cost is \$95.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling.

The watch is being introduced in response to blind consumers' demands for a talking watch that is practical and reliable. It has been manufactured by one of the world's largest digital watch makers in consultation with blind consumers. It tells the time, has an alarm, comes with cassette instructions and a limited one year warranty from B.I.T. The cost is \$50.00 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling. Both products can be purchased either by mail or with a credit card by calling our toll free number (from outside Massachusetts) 1-800-BIT-TALK. Mail orders can be sent to B.I.T. Corporation, P.O. Box 70, MIT Branch, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

Sincerely,
William S. Prenovitz
Marketing Manager
Boston Information &
Technology Corporation

****Items for Sale:**

We have been asked by Fred Sanderson of Wisconsin to run the following announcement:

"Available Now: Tape cassettes (C90's

and C60's), Combination Chess-Checker sets and other items. Reasonably priced. For information, contact: Option Central, Fred Sanderson, Proprietor, 1604 Carroll Avenue, Green Bay, Wisconsin 54304, Department BRM1; 414-498-9699."

****Change of Location and Newly Elected Officers:**

The NFB of Mystic Valley (formerly the NFB of Watertown, Massachusetts) was relocated, for reasons of expediency and practicality, in the Somerville area. The name, Mystic Valley, was chosen so as not to limit membership to one city. We have a new and centrally located meeting place, convenient to the bus, which stops right in front of the door.

Our constitutional officers are: Gene Raschi, President; Kathy Doherty, First Vice President; Linda Raschi, Second Vice President and also temporary Recording Secretary; Donna Raschi, Treasurer; Doris Krafve, Correspondence Secretary; and Henry Fitzpatrick, Sergeant At Arms. This will serve to alert all Federationists that the NFB of Mystic Valley is alive and well and flourishing.

****Talking Glucose Tester:**

Tom Anderson, one of the most active leaders of the NFB of Ohio, writes that he recently tried a machine which blind diabetics can use for testing the amount of glucose in their blood. He says that the machine gave its reading in spoken words through a voice synthesizer and that he was greatly impressed with it. It is called the "Reflocheck-S." For further information call 1-800-858-8072.

****Elected:**

At the July meeting of the Gateway City Chapter (St. Louis, Missouri) the following people were elected to two-year terms: Kent Kolaga, President; Dennis Neely, Vice President; Anna Schell, Secretary; Debbie Whitney, Treasurer; Robyn Bradley, Board Member; and Sandy Whitney, Board Member.

****Gertrude Sitt Remembered:**
Dear President Jernigan:

Enclosed please find check #2796 in the amount of \$70.00. This money was collected from members of the California delegation late Saturday afternoon, July 8, to be donated to our national treasury in honor and in memory of Gertrude Sitt.

For the past several years I have had the privilege of working with Mrs. Sitt on the Committee on Library Services, and I found her dependable assistance invaluable. Mrs. Sitt will be missed by all of us on the Library Committee, as well as in California and throughout the movement.

Cordially,
Sharon Gold, President
National Federation of the Blind
of California

****Would Like to Borrow:**

We have been asked to carry the following announcement:

"Anyone having first year's issues of Syndicated Columnists Weekly, please contact Reed Devlin at 108 Ridge Avenue, Central Islip, New York 11722. Prompt return of borrowed issues assured."

****Massachusetts Seminar for Parents:**

Gerry Paice writes:

"On March 24, 1984, our NFB affiliate

in Massachusetts conducted a parents' seminar at Framingham State College. The coordinator was Federationist Mrs. Priscilla Ferris, our First Vice President. The seminar was attended by the parents of blind children, teachers, educational administrators, and college students in the area. Also represented were producers of tactile toys and providers of Braille and large print reproduction. There was an enthusiastic response to the entire undertaking."

****Diabetes Committee:**

"The NFB Diabetes Committee is alive, well, and growing! We were established on July 4, 1984, at our convention in Phoenix. This year is primarily organizational, and we hope to attain divisional status at our 1985 NFB convention in Louisville. Following are the goals of the committee: 1) To support and educate all diabetics about the ramifications of the disease. 2) To act as a support network for diabetics who have undergone kidney transplants as well as to those contemplating it, or are on dialysis. 3) To support diabetics who are experiencing vision loss—or the loss of an eye. 4) To provide information about the use of insulin pumps. 5) To establish a 'reference library' of articles regarding diabetes. 6) To publish a pamphlet for dissemination defining our goals and possibly a brochure giving positive facts regarding kidney transplants for the diabetic.

"Anyone wishing to join us or needing further information may write to: Karen S. Mayry, President/Treasurer, P.O. Box 124, Rapid City, South Dakota 57709; Eileen O'Brien, Vice President, 791 Cambridge, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126; Patty Arocho, Secretary, 80 North Moore

Street Apt. 4K, New York, New York 10013."

****Tapes and Old Time Radio:**

We have been asked to carry the following announcement:

"For sale, reel-to-reel tapes—five and seven inch reels. \$1.00 each. Also, I have a small collection of old time radio shows on seven inch reels for \$2.00 each. Contact Raymond Rokita, 5821 Richwood, Apt. 9, Lansing, Michigan 48910."

****Michigan Seminar for Parents:**

Dorothy Grubb (Federationist from Lansing, Michigan) reports that, "The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan hosted a seminar for parents of

blind children in Lansing on September 8, 1984. Our purpose in hosting this event was to help parents with any questions they have in dealing with, or the education of, their blind children. At the conclusion of the seminar evaluations were handed out to those parents attending, and we are proud to say they believed our seminar was excellent. Thanks to Bev Helmboldt, our state first vice president, who worked very hard to organize and prepare this seminar. Our work has just begun, however, in helping these parents. They need our guidance and support in order for their children to receive the training and opportunities they deserve to become productive and independent adults."

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

1800 JOHNSON STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

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